



**Norman Goldstein MD
Editor, Hawaii Medical Journal**

Consulting Physicians – Hawaiian Island Travel

Hawaii is very fortunate in having an excellent cadre of physicians. We now have well-trained, competent family physicians and consultant specialists in all fields of medicine from aviation medicine to workers compensation authorities.

Unfortunately, as in all areas of the country, the distribution of some of the specialists usually centers at the largest patient population, in Hawaii on the island of Oahu. For many years, Oahu-based physicians would fly to our neighbor islands to service the specialty needs of our state's population. In addition, some of our neighbor island physicians fly to Oahu for HMA, other specialty society meetings, hospital and medical school programs, as well as teaching responsibilities.

As Susie Thieman, Editor of the Downtown Planet, said in her column "So, Here's What I Think..." the scheduling and the cost of inter-island travel has become a major problem. This is not only for our patients coming to Oahu, but for physicians traveling between our islands. Ms. Thieman states, "maybe it's time for a third airline to serve the residents of this fine island state, to come in and be creative in both service and pricing."

Over the past 40 years, we have had several third airlines, but because of limited and restricted docking space at our airports and competition by the two major airlines, they were not able to survive.

We actually do now have a third airline, Pacific Wings. They have a limited program at this time. For example, they only have eight flights from Honolulu to Kahului. Some are direct 40 minute flights, some with a stopover on Lanai or Molokai with a one hour flight time. The round trip cost is \$134, whereas Hawaiian and Aloha prices range from \$83 to \$199 depending on day and time. Pacific Wings suggest checking in 30 minutes before a flight, while Hawaiian and Aloha suggest 90 minutes. As Thieman points out, the potential reduction of the number of flights and longer times between flights can be a very expensive waste of time.

The Hawaii Medical Journal will be doing a survey of physicians' use of the inter-island airlines for neighbor island consultation services. The results will be published in the Journal.

Maybe our Governor can appoint a Blue-Ribbon Panel to study the problem and make some specific suggestions to alleviate this situation for regular inter-island travelers.



Animal rights activists say hunters threaten species.

It's a bold-faced lie. Thanks to wildlife management programs involving sportsmen, moose, elk, white-tailed deer and pronghorn antelope are thriving in North America. So are other species.

Let's care enough to get the facts before making decisions about bulls and cows.

Safari Club International Foundation
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